

- ▶ establish in legislation the right to strike and abolish the right of employers to grant financial incentives to employees who do not join unions;
- ▶ take more effective steps to combat de facto discrimination, particularly against blacks and other ethnic minorities, women, and Catholics in Northern Ireland;
- ▶ reconsider the policy and procedures for placing large numbers of children in foster homes, in light of the reported increase of abuse of children as a result of this policy, and examine the feasibility of more use of effectively supervised children's homes if in the best interest of the child;
- ▶ include in the next report information on measures taken to combat the phenomenon of violence against women and update analysis of which measures appear to yield the best results in dealing with this problem;
- ▶ take immediate steps to reduce the waiting time for surgery;
- ▶ take appropriate measures to eliminate corporal punishment in those schools in which this practice is still permitted, i.e. privately-financed schools;
- ▶ consider appropriate measures in Northern Ireland to facilitate the establishment of additional integrated schools in areas where a significant number of parents have indicated their desire to have their children enrolled in such schools;
- ▶ undertake closer monitoring of the incidence of homelessness and forced evictions and provide statistics on this issue in the periodic report;
- ▶ formulate uniform defined criteria for school exclusions and report on what government programmes, if any, exist to facilitate the insertion of excluded young people into alternative training or apprenticeship programmes;
- ▶ accord the same degree of support and status to the Irish language in Northern Ireland as to Gaelic in Scotland and Welsh in Wales; and,
- ▶ consider a requirement that a Human Rights Assessment or Impact Statement be made an integral part of every proposed legislative or policy initiative on a basis analogous to Environmental Impact Assessments or Statements.

Civil and Political Rights

Signed: 16 September 1968; ratified: 20 May 1976.

The U.K.'s fifth periodic is due 18 August 1999.

Reservations and Declarations: Paragraph 3 (d) of article 14; paragraph 4 of article 23; paragraphs (2) (b) and (3) of article 10; paragraph (2) (a) of article 10; article 11; paragraph 1 of article 12; paragraph 4 of article 12; paragraph 3 (d), article 14; article 20; paragraph 3, article 24; declaration under article 41.

Racial Discrimination

Signed: 11 October 1966; ratified: 7 March 1969.

The U.K.'s 15th periodic report is due 6 April 1998.

Reservations and Declarations: Paragraphs (a), (b) and (c), article 4; and articles 6, 20 and 15.

The U.K.'s 14th periodic report (CERD/C/299/Add.9) was considered by the Committee at its March 1997 session. The report prepared by the government provides information related to articles 2 through 7 and article 14 and includes commentary on implementation of the Convention in the Crown Dependencies as well as dependent territories overseas. There are three points of focus in the report: the Asylum and Immigration Act 1996; the introduction of anti-discrimination legislation in Northern Ireland; and information on the development of plans to improve the economic and social conditions of ethnic minority groups throughout the United Kingdom. Commentary is provided on legal and administrative provisions related to racial discrimination, including the Race Relations Act 1976 which makes racial discrimination generally unlawful in the fields of employment, education, housing and the provision of goods and services, and the Asylum and Immigration Act. Commentary is also provided on bodies such as the Commission for Racial Equality, the inter-departmental Racial Attacks Group which was established in 1987 and focusses on ensuring that the response to racially motivated crimes and harassment is as uniform and effective as possible, the Ethnic Minority Advisory Committee, and the Racial Incidents Standing Committee which considers a wide range of racial problems and publishes examples of good practice between and within agencies at a local level. Other areas covered in the report include but are not limited to: the problem of racial disadvantage; attacks on Jewish organizations; police-community relations; deaths in custody; racial incidents; religious discrimination; employment and training, housing, social security and education.

The Committee's concluding observations (CERD/C/304/Add.20) state that the failure to incorporate the full substance of the Convention into domestic law, and restrictive interpretations given to article 4 (hate speech, racist organizations) may impede full implementation of the Convention.

The Committee welcomed measures taken to increase participation of members of ethnic minorities in public and government office and the police. Other measures welcomed included: adoption of the Housing Act 1996 to combat racial discrimination in housing; establishment of programmes for inspection and supervision of detention in police stations by members of local communities; changes to the code of practice regulating police powers and procedures related to stop and search exercises; creation of a Racial Incidents Standing Committee to implement the report of the Racial Attacks Group to combat racially motivated incidents; and, adoption of a 10-point action plan to assist ethnic minority pupils.

Among other measures welcomed by the Committee were: seminars and training programmes for judges, magistrates and law enforcement officials; public information campaigns against racial discrimination; adoption of the Race Relations (Northern Ireland) Order 1997, outlawing racial discrimination in employment, training, education, housing and provision of goods and services; development of draft model legislation in Anguilla, Bermuda, British Virgin Islands, Falkland Islands and Saint Helena to prohibit racial discrimination; adoption of the British Nationality (Hong Kong) Bill, granting the right of ethnic minorities in Hong Kong with no other nationality to be registered as full British citizens; provision of equal status of Chinese and English in Hong Kong courts at all levels; and, in Hong Kong, education